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The AMERICAN SPECTATOR

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EDITORIAL

THE class struggle à la Hollywood opens up a chapter in the history of proletarian literature which has not received the attention it deserves. It is now the fashion for Marxian literati to procure for themselves over-paid jobs as Hollywood hacks, and then to fulminate against the mere bourgeoisie, who are too deeply absorbed in the daily routine of making a living to write impassioned diatribes on behalf of Justice. At intervals these martyrs return to New York, where they induce innocent groups of idealists to put on the plays of social protest which they have elucubrated during their leisure moments in Beverley Hills. When these productions are treated to the criticism which they deserve, the aggrieved authors appeal to all friends of the working classes to witness how scurvily they have been handled by the brutal capitalists of Eastern criticism.

Most of these writers never at any time showed more than a possibly faint trace of third-rate talent. After a few months of writing the boy-gets-the-girl stories for Hollywood, the last, final spark flickers and dies. All that remains is a vast and childish indignation which is mistaken for creative ability. Very often, one suspects, despite protestations of proletarian fervor, an eye is still cocked in the direction of the movie moguls, whom experience has shown to be more susceptible to pretentious sentimentality than Eastern critics and audiences. When the bait has been duly swallowed and paid for, the authors again trek West, and fill the *New Masses* and other such publications with their lamentations. It is a pleasant luxury to indulge one's proletarian emotions for $1500 or $2000 a week. Then one's heart really bleeds for the Scottsboro boys and the victims of bourgeois greed.

On reflection, however, one can see that there is a subtle alliance between movie literature and proletarian literature. Both are artistically false and intellectually disingenuous. Both portray a non-existent world, in which there are no shades, and where elementary half-truths are presented with the broadest strokes, in the certainty of thus reaching the meanest intelligence. What, essentially, is the difference between a movie or a novel devoted to Communist propaganda and a movie or novel devoted to the theory that the American boy not only gets the girl, but the cash as well? Hollywood glorifies the conception of life held by millions of American workers. Moscow glorifies the conception of life held by millions of Russian workers. Neither can afford to ignore the current *mores* or, above all, to defy them. A writer who caters to the current superstitions of either of these audiences must conform to the indignities of his job.

Our American Hollywood Marxists like to have it both ways. For cash money they maintain the constant appeal to cheap greed and snobbery; for idealism they compose literature intended to console the less fortunate of their class-conscious comrades. In either case, they would be more honestly employed laying bricks.

PROLETARIAN LOGIC

"WHEN a Nazi with hands dripping with the blood of workers begins to sentimentalize over Wagner, or an ex-Czarist officer who has hung and flogged peasants tells us that Dostoievsky shakes him to the very soul, one is perhaps justified in suspecting both Wagner and Dostoievsky"—Michael Gold in the *New Masses*.

So Wagner was a Nazi and Dostoievsky a Czarist.

"It is easy to understand the Gilbert and Sullivan cult. Having once sung the part of Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B., in their 'Pinafore,' and having hundreds of their verses in my mind, I can testify to the hypnotic spell these two magicians cast upon one. But let me protest, in as unamiable a spirit as is possible, against the Gilbert and Sullivan cultists. They are bourgeois culture-hounds who want to avoid all reality and strength in art."—Michael Gold in the *New Masses*.

So Michael Gold is a bourgeois culture-hound.

"The audience that adores them would resent the same wit if it were directed on a Communist path. This is all an unconscious process, perhaps, but the true class culture grows by such unconscious accretions. When we develop a Communist Gilbert and Sullivan, these people will hate it." —Michael Gold in the *New Masses*.

So the popularity of Bernard Shaw, that veteran Marxist, is due to his unceasing anti-Socialist propaganda on behalf of bourgeois ideals.

PROLETARIANS OF THE WORLD UNITE! YOU HAVE NOTHING BUT YOUR BRAINS TO LOSE!

LAMENT FOR FALSTAFF

by BRANCH CABELL

WHEN you departed this life, Sir John—at your country place, in Norfolk in the November of 1459—none doubts that you died, as became a pre-eminently religious English gentleman, in the hope of a glorious resurrection. How very mercifully was hid from you the too speedy fulfilment of your aspirations! For you had looked to be revived by Dan Gabriel, his dreadful and holy trumpet: in no wild fever dream could it by any chance have occurred to you that a lewd heathen goddess, the Muse of Comedy, would prove your awakener—and to an apotheosis how incredible, how sordid, how cruel, how delightful!

If I become exclamatory, Sir, it is because no considerate person can regard the unfairness of your doom without giving a loose to some natural emotion. For eighty and more years you had lived with piety and intelligence and honor, with a clear conscience and your due of worldly success. You had been an admired soldier during at least thirty-five of these years. Throughout some two or three campaigns, indeed, you had commanded all the English expeditionary forces in the French wars, winning as generalissimo the great battle of the Herrings, in which you fought against the combined armies of Scotland and France; you had been governor of Maine and Anjou; you were a knight of the Garter; and toward the end of your life you had thrived notably as a retired capitalist, as an extensive landholder, as an open-handed philanthropist, and as a judicious patron of learning.

You had been yelped at, of course, by the envious, like any other prospering person; and a charge of military blunders you were once forced to repel—with entire success. The only failings more or less plausibly imputed to you appear to have been a certain rigor in your business dealings, as an unlenient creditor, and something of fanaticism in the practise of your religion. You inclined, in brief, to be a bit of a Puritan a good while before puritanism had been labelled. Such, then, was the honored and austere gentleman who died in the November of 1459; and whom that bad baggage, Thalia, saw fit to revive prematurely about a hundred and forty years later.

It skills not, Sir John, to repeat through what causes you were thrust up into a pillory originally meant for your colleague in arms, Lord Cobham. The point is that at this time, about 1599, a poet gave you new life upon earth, at a price which to a man of your known business principles, and of your painstaking respectability, might well have appeared exorbitant.

Since with your other virtues you combined a gentleman's share of scholarship (as befitted a co-founder of St. Mary Magdalen College) you will recall, no doubt, that of the great Greek captain Achilles it is recorded how, in Ades' dim realm, he declared to his former comrade, to wily Odysseus, that it was better to live in earth's sunlight as a slave than to be king over the shadowy nations of the dead. But I question if even this feebly whining Achilles (upon whose heroic nature death seems to have acted rather deleteriously) would have been content to live again as the Sir John Falstaff whom the last three centuries have known and—it is the bitter truth, Sir—have laughed at.

For the poet who revived you, Sir John, has left you not one shielding rag of gentility. He has set you a-stagger among us, an obscene gross belching tun-belly, out at the elbows, reeking of sack, gray with iniquity. Of the skilled and triumphant soldier this poet has made a faintheart; of the Puritan, a wencher; of the magnate, a wastrel; and of the staid business man, a Dionysiac choregus of all riot, immortality's darling. He has made of you, in brief, a calumny so engaging to human fancy that by no chance will mankind ever give up this counterfeit Falstaff in order to accord you, Sir, the respect and the praise which, living, you earned amply.

Your case is outrageous; no man was ever libelled with more striking injustice; but your case is hopeless.

It is at all times the privilege of the artist to recreate history; provided only he has genius, he can elude punishment and compel belief; but I know of no instance in which this birthright has been abused more wantonly than when Shakespeare gave to the future his caricature of Sir John Falstaff. For Thackeray, or for Dumas, or for Maurice Hewlett—to cite but three prevaricators among thousands—when they libelled severally the Old Chevalier, Catherine de Medici, or Mary Stuart, there was at least the excuse that the story they had in hand moved on the hinges of calumny. The events of their victims' lives and the nature of their victims' characters have been somewhat misrepresented, for utilitarian ends, for the plot's sake; and at worst, the sin is an affair of recoloring and of shifted emphases.

But you, Sir John, have been endowed with all the vices you shunned; stripped of the many virtues which you practised faithfully throughout eighty and some years; and thrust into miry actions with which you had no more to do than had Aretino or King Arthur. As a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church, I cannot doubt that the soul of William Shakespeare is eternally damned for his parody of a devout Christian gentleman: and I doubt not, either, that upon holidays and the major saints' days you are permitted to peep in at his torments.

It is your full due.

Yet, as a writer, I am conscious of some little sneaking complacency. Heaven made the flesh and blood Falstaff of the very best human material, turning out an exceptionally fine specimen of divine craftsmanship. By-and-by (through what exact causes we shall not ever know) a mere writer, the approved captain of my clan, made us another Falstaff after his own notions, a lewd and thorough-going and high-spirited libel, a gay trucidation of truth. And promptly the romance drove the reality out of the field of human beliefs.

I educe a quaint moral which—to your somewhat puritanic ears, Sir John—it seems wiser not to express explicity.

I educe also, Sir John, that your virtues have gone unrewarded, and that for once the memory of the just is not blessed.

And I educe, in taking leave of you, that the innate depravity of man's nature is well attested by the fact that before your undeserved obloquy we stand charmed, and applaud the outrage delightedly. For Heaven made you good and great and successful: but art has made you amusing.

AS ONE CRITIC TO ANOTHER

by GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

I

IT is the mark of the very young critic to regard praise as a symptom of weakness.

II

The tolerance that often comes to a critic in his later years is simply the result of a belated consciousness of the complete and utter unimportance of nine-tenths of the persons and performances he is brought to criticize. Its synonym is indifference.

III

The quality of a critic is best to be appraised by the quality of his enemies. To analyze his worth it is only necessary to analyze the worth of those who detest him.

IV

To demand a consistent and invariable dignity of criticism is ridiculous. There is a place for dignity and a place for low roughhouse. What is more absurd than a dignified and austere approach to rubbish?

V

The cocksure critic may sometimes be an ass, but at least he is always more readable than the perhaps sounder critic given to hesitations, doubts, and qualifications. It may be too bad, but it is, alas, true.

VI

A smooth, vigorous and stimulating style may contrive to give a second-rate critic the convincing aspect of a first-rater.

VII

Critics are fond of defending themselves against the allegation that their verdicts are sometimes colored by their immediate mood, state of health, etc. They assert that their judgments are not affected by such things and that their minds remain clear, calm and equitable even when their wives or best girls have just been run over by street-cars, their children been bitten by cinnamon bears at the zoo, their banks have closed, and they themselves are the victims of dreadful bellyaches. But they lie, and they know it. There doubtless never lived a critic whose opinions were not at one time or another influenced by the way he felt at the moment he was passing judgment.

VIII

It is a favorite professorial belief that the more broadly informed and educated the critic, the better a critic he will be. This is largely bosh. It avails the critic of literature, drama, painting or music nothing at all to be a ranking scholar in astronomy, geology, calculus, Egyptology, or any one or all of a score of such extrinsic subjects. If he knows thoroughly his own trade, that is enough—and he will be a good enough critic to suit anyone. There is no more reason to demand that he be richly equipped in a lot of other directions than there is to demand that a good pianist be a Bachelor of Science, or a master plumber a Phi Beta Kappa.

IX

We frequently hear it said that a critic should never indulge in personalities; that such indulgence is beneath the high art of criticism and woefully cheapens it. Here, also, we engage a pretty nosegay of nonsense. The practitioner of an art is often as properly the subject of criticism and comment as the art he practises. To keep personalities out of criticism of musical performances or dramatic performances, for example, is to insist that the critic not leave his study and confine his remarks to the music script or the printed play. Criticism of painting may be rid of personalities and so, to a lesser extent, may criticism of certain forms of literature. But, in general, criticism that sedulously avoids personalities is like a novel whose characters are sketched merely in the flat.

X

The word *katharsis* has been responsible for more lovely bunk in criticism than any five hundred or thousand other words all rolled together.

The Pulitzer Prize

THE LINE-UP

by SHERWOOD ANDERSON

THIS curious performance takes place twice a week. It is good theatre. We went into a big hall and there were already some two thousand men assembled. I saw no women, and there were no women prisoners in the New York police line-up that morning. Perhaps the women had been quite innocent during the half week, and perhaps they do not do it to women.

The walls of the long hall were painted a warm gray, and we sat in a mass at the back, in a dim light. The policemen were in civilian clothes. The Police Commissioner, once a General, wears the red button of France. He made me think of Frank Crowninshield. There was the same masculine gentleness. The New York Commissioner of Police has style.

The police, in their civilian clothes, looked like any crowd of rather well-set-up citizens. They were surprisingly young and good-looking. I wonder if all this stuff about the brutality of the police is also romance. I have always been afraid of the police. There may be a criminal sleeping in every man.

So we were assembled at the back of the hall, a solid mass of humanity. The Commissioner came in with two or three guests and they sat apart. I heard him introduce one of the men to another as "Governor." "I'll bet he's the Governor of New Hampshire," I thought. I don't know why I thought that. There was a man who sat alone, in a high pulpit-like place. He was silent. A reading-lamp shone down on the white pages of a book and he wrote in the book.

At the end of the room there was a sheer wall, also painted a warm gray, such a wall as would be good to hang paintings against, and a narrow bridge led across it. The prisoners walked across the bridge. A man stood silently there. He made a signal, and one of the prisoners stopped. He was under a strong light, the only strong light in the room.

Two thousand police, looking intently at you, try to fix your face in their memory. The light was so arranged that the face of the prisoner seemed to jump out at you. At his back there was a white board with figures on it. It marked the prisoner's exact height. It was just such a board as they put up along the banks of rivers to mark the stages of the river in flood.

Intense silence in the room. A voice spoke. This was the best theatre of all. The voice seemed to come out of the sky, as though God spoke to the prisoner. There were no men walking across the bridge for minor offenses. All were felons.

Voice: "John Harley . . . arrested at Fourteenth and Broadway, by Officers Grady and Hines . . . taken in the act of attempting to pick a woman's pocket. What about it, John?"

Each prisoner took it in his own way. There were Negro men and white men, pocket-pickers, stealers of automobiles, killers, thugs, highjackers, racketeers. There is this odd thing you find out about the world of crime. The man who steals an automobile, gets caught and sent to prison, comes out and steals another automobile. He doesn't begin to pick pockets or hold men up. He steals automobiles. The man who has killed a woman kills another, the dip keeps on dipping, the racketeer racketeering. It's discouraging. There are certain of my own traits I would like to change. As you watch the line-up you are inclined to throw up your hands.

"What about it, John?" The man in the darkness, some place up above, asked his questions in a clear voice. The voice was not unkindly. It did not attempt to bully. It was almost friendly.

"What about it, John?" John's eyes move nervously about. From where he is standing, his face flooded by the strong light, he can see none of us. It is as though he stood in some space between worlds. He decides to plead. "I have a wife and children. I needed money, had to have it."

"Have you ever been arrested before, John?"

John wets his lips with his tongue. After all, this is cruel. There is a queer sort of impersonal cruelty.

"Yes. I was arrested twice before." He hesitates. "Well, maybe three times." There is a period of silence and then the voice reads off John's record . . . arrested eleven times . . . eight convictions . . . has served time in Sing Sing, in the Ohio State Penitentiary. John was a veteran. He is man of fifty. A silent man, down below, makes a signal and John walks away.

Into darkness, no doubt to another long period of darkness in some prison. He will be an old man when he comes out again.

Others come, blacks and whites, defiant ones, some who attempt to be slick, some who squirm, some who arouse pity in you, others who arouse fear. There were two young men the likes of whom I had never seen before. There was something in them altogether depraved and fearless. In your heart you knew that if you wanted someone killed these two would do it at a reasonable price. One of them, the slicker, more glib one, did the talking for them both. They let him talk.

"We were just going along the street."

"Where did you get the gun?"

"I saw it lying in the gutter. I picked it up."

"It was still smoking, wasn't it, Ed?"

"Yes. It was in the gutter. We were just walking past. I picked it up." That pair also off into the darkness.

They kept coming and going. It was as though some terrible realistic painter was hanging pictures on the warm gray wall, under the light. "Here you are. This is a sample of what you can be, you humans! Take a good look!"

You get all sorts of notions in your head; remember books you have read about crime and criminals. You come out of the place, walk along the street. There is a sudden realization of something, of crime always going on, there, behind the walls of that building, in the next street, in the bright sunlight, in the darkness at night.

As I was coming out of the building I spoke to one of the sub-commissioners of police. He was in civilian clothes, a shrewd but kindly-looking man. All of the police, assembled for the line-up that morning, had got, as I had, a jump of the heart at the sight of the two young killers. Their appearance under the light, under the voice, had been the high spot of the morning police drama. "There should be a lethal chamber, shouldn't there?" I said to the sub-commissioner of police and he looked at me, I thought with wise eyes. "Yes. But who would say who was to go into it?" he said. I thought his eyes were a bit too shrewd as he looked at me. "Sure. Sure," I said, hurrying away.

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BIBLE BOLONEY

by LEWIS HERMAN

EVERY so often church periodicals and Sunday-school pamphleteers emblazon their front pages with streamer headlines, such as: THE BIBLE STILL LEADS! Newspaper book pages which have a fairly representative group of religious readers run a separate box in their columns for that same marvelous bit of information. And each article enunciates the beautiful sentiment that "somewhere in this world a Bible is being sold every second of every day of the year." From all of which we are expected to believe that there is still an enormous demand for the Word of God.

What does it matter that figures show that the annual church membership is rapidly falling off? What does it matter if the alarming signs of religious disintegration rumble ominously, so long as there is consolation in the fact that the Bible is the world's best seller?

The Literary Digest of April 30th, 1933, published some statistics furnished by the American Bible Society. In 1929, in the United States, 14,000,000 copies of the Scriptures were distributed. In the entire world, it said further, the total was 35,500,000 copies. Yet, on the next page of the same issue of the magazine, there was an article entitled "Should The Sunday-Schools Go?"

Commenting on this article in the *Digest*, the *Christian Century* asked: "Who is buying the Bibles? Why are they buying them? What do they do with them after they are bought? Does the buying of a Bible indicate a vital interest in its contents?" The article might also have asked: "How many of the Bibles were sold at cost price? How many were sold below cost? How many were given away free of charge?" Of course, such questions are not raised in the monthly reports of the American Bible Society. Instead, there is listed only the lump sum received from the sale of its Bibles. The Society states that it "issued" about 37 million copies of the Scriptures in English since 1875. When it includes the Bible among the best-sellers, it implies that 37 million copies of the Scriptures were sold. Yet it almost invariably refers to its activities as "distributing," "issuing," or "bringing the word of God."

The Gideon Society in America is not naive enough to insist that its Bibles are sold. It frankly states its purpose in its charter, when it was first known as the Christian Commercial Travellers' Association. That was to place a copy of the Bible in every hotel room in America. Its reports of 1928 show that it had distributed, *free of charge*, more than one million copies of the Good Book. And it is still distributing. An English society, organized for the same purpose twenty-five years before its American cousin, must have distributed almost twice as many.

In 1896 American Bible Society colporteurs, as it quaintly labels its drummers, had distributed 400,060 volumes of the Scriptures in China, "at less than the cost of manufacture." How much less the report neglected to mention. In twenty-two years, they had distributed 16,562,875 copies in China, in fourteen dialects, some of which were translated by a converted Jew, and that included among others the Wenli, Swabi, Fuchowe and Sam Kiong dialects. If the report of the English Bible Society be true, the British colporteurs cited a price of sixty-two cents per Bible from the heathen Chinee. How many of the sixteen million American Bibles were actually paid for by the converts themselves? Would a Chinese coolie, who averages two cents a day for his labor in the rice swamps, be willing to part with twenty five days' pay for a copy of the Holy Scriptures? Rumor has it that he uses the paper of the Bible leaves to make his ceremonial firecrackers. Would he be willing to forego a year's supply of rice so that he could read the divine words, many of which had been plagiarized from his own prophets? Although the Britishers claim to have received sixty-two cents for their Bibles, the Americans are strangely silent on that subject. Instead, they often advise their colporteurs, in rule Number 3 in their "Rules and Regulations of Distribution" that ". . . as a rule, even among the heathen, the Scriptures should be sold at some price, although that may be less than the cost. . . ."

There is nothing in this rule that compels the colporteur to receive payment for his wares. The "as a rule" gives him enough leeway to get around payment, as does the word "should." The phrase, "even among the heathens," indicates what the attitude of the colporteurs *should* be in America. In the American Bible Agents' Guide the colporteurs are advised:

". . . these Bibles should be introduced to every house, as many being sold as possible, and *given away* as necessary. . . ."

". . . a good supply of Bibles and Testaments for *gratis distribution* ought always to be on hand. . . ."

In 1931, the American Bible Society reported that it had spent $934,342 while it had collected only $317,456 in sales. Where was the money obtained to cover the enormous deficits incurred in "selling" the Bible? The Society's reports answer this question. Appeals are made to the dying faithful to will their estates to the Bible Society. Churches are given quotas to fill. Individuals are importuned for donations. Old ladies run bazaars. Investments are made in stocks and bonds, and even in mortgages, where money is sometimes sucked out by the customary foreclosure methods.

Suppose there were to be organized a great company of public spirited citizens who had banded together in order to distribute at cost, less than cost or even gratis, the books concerning the life of that redoubtable American hero, Frank Merriwell. Millions of dollars had been collected for this purpose. Thousands of men and women would consecrate their lives to the holy cause . . . at a comfortable salary, of course. Hundreds of translators would be set to work transcribing the golden words of the master into 164 different languages and dialects. Thousands of trained high-pressure salesmen would be sent out to every corner of the globe with prospectuses, specimen plates and binding samples, and with the instruction that they were to sell their books either at cost, below cost, or even for nothing. In no time "The Legion of Frank Merriwell" would be publishing the statement: "Frank Merriwell Leads the World!" The heathen in Africa and China and Tennessee would rear temples to his benign name and make genuflections to their new God.

And the *Literary Digest* would be able to report:

"FRANK MERRIWELL SELLS MORE THAN 999,000,000,000,000 COPIES!"

Now that Rabbis Stephen S. Wise and Louis I. Newman have preached on whether the "House of Rothschild" movie is an asset or a liability to the Jews, the Editors of The American Spectator eagerly await a sermon from Bishop Manning inquiring whether the "She Done Him Wrong" movie is an asset or a liability to the Christians.

DRUG BOLONEY

by JOSEPH FULLING FISHMAN

For Ten Years Inspector of Prisons for the United States Government

THE narcotic addict is not a criminal. To the half-baked "penologists," "criminologists," and other "experts" who have for years flooded the magazines, the stage, the screen, and the radio with learned and voluble discourses to the contrary, to say nothing of the general public which swallows such pap, this statement is heresy, akin to saying that the sun does not rise, or that fish do not swim; but the fact remains, and I repeat that the narcotic addict is not a criminal.

It is almost unnecessary to recreate the popular picture of this much-maligned butt of official alibis for the prevalence of crime, so thoroughly has it been engraved on the country's consciousness. He is almost invariably portrayed as a sneaking, sniveling, yellow-hearted little weakling, too cowardly to think of committing the colossal crimes he is supposed to commit unless he first nerves himself with a shot of dope. Finally, after perpetrating the most fiendish atrocities, the drug quickly gets him, and shattered and emaciated he finally crumbles into dissolution.

It is an engaging and terrifying picture, almost pleasantly terrifying to adults in the same way as little children are pleasantly terrified by the chills made to run up and down their spines while listening to ghost stories. But like the ghost stories, alas, the picture so drawn is simply not true. Not only is it not a photographic likeness; it is no likeness at all. The real facts are readily available to anyone who wants to obtain them, but like so many facts in other fields they are allowed to remain obscured and unwanted.

The New York County Penitentiary on Welfare Island, that same institution which has been in the press so much of late because of a ridiculous "raid," which was nothing more nor less than a routine search publicized, gets more drug addicts every year than any six or more of the big state prisons in the country combined. More drug addicts go there each year than to the prisons at Sing Sing, Auburn, Dannemora, Joliet, Jefferson City, Missouri, Stillwater, Minnesota, and San Quentin, California, put together. So it was quite easy to make a study of the group of approximately twelve hundred addicts—twelve to thirteen per cent of the entire population annually sentenced to the Welfare Island institution. This study revealed (and the figures are available to anyone who wants them) that not one addict out of this entire twelve hundred had been convicted for other than the most trivial offense. There was not even a third-rate criminal among all of them. The records showed that they had been convicted of vagrancy, failure to support wives, or some trivial form of disorderly conduct, and a search going back for years proved that those among them who had served previous prison terms had been convicted of exactly the same kind of trivial offenses.

Anyone who really knows narcotic addicts realizes why this is and must be so. The average addict of the type who finally finds his way into the jails—and there are thousands of a different type on the outside who never get into a penal institution—is a lazy, shiftless, incompetent, emotionally unstable individual who drifts through life along the line of least resistance, and whose one and only concern with the business of living is to see that he is supplied with narcotics. With few exceptions he hasn't the courage, the stamina, the spirit or the adventure to steal even in a small way, while he is simply incapable of the mental effort, resourcefulness and courage required for really big crimes. It is true that occasionally, very occasionally, he will commit small thefts when, for some reason, it is impossible for him to beg or borrow enough money to keep himself supplied with drugs. These are exceptional cases, but they are the one and the only relationship which exists between narcotic addiction and crime, despite the voluminous publicity to the contrary.

It is again a general public belief, also thoroughly inculcated by assiduous propaganda, that narcotic addiction shortens life and wrecks health. The facts justify no such conclusion. Of the twelve hundred addicts on Welfare Island, it was found that by far the greater majority had been using narcotics steadily for five years or more. Considerably more than fifty per cent had used them for ten years or more; twenty-five to thirty per cent for fifteen years or more; a large number for twenty years or more; and a not inconsiderable percentage for twenty-five, thirty, thirty-five, and even forty years. Yet these men, after being "taken off" the drug and living the routine life of the prison for two or more months—they're usually sent to the institution for one hundred days—go out at the end of their terms in a state of health approximating that of non-addicts who have lived the same kind of dissipated and unrestrained lives on the outside.

The facts concerning the length of time they had used narcotics were based on the records of the institution and the statements of the older guards who had seen these addicts come and go over a long period of years. They were not based on the uncorroborated statements of the addicts themselves, as drug addicts are notorious liars.

Then again, despite the sympathy the sentimental lavish on them, drug addicts of the jail type do not consider themselves "slaves" to a habit, and are not at all desirous of being cured. As a matter of fact, not one out of a hundred ever is permanently cured, and the only advantage in taking them off the drug temporarily, while they are in prison, is that it assists materially in the maintenance of the institution's discipline, as addicts who have not been "taken off," in their constant efforts to smuggle drugs, and in their unhappy, peevish, and irritating temperaments, are the worst nuisance with which a penal institution can possibly be afflicted. Even those who go before a magistrate and ask to be sent to jail so that they can get a "cure"—there are three or four hundred every year in New York City—do not go because they actually want to be cured, but simply because they have been taking increasing doses of the drug and have reached the stage where they are no longer financially able to support the habit. So they have themselves committed, get "taken off," and then go out happy because they are now able to get the same kick out of an eighth or a quarter of a grain as they were previously getting from the five, ten, fifteen, or even twenty, thirty or forty grains a day, which they were taking at the time they asked to be committed. Then the process starts all over again. It is commonplace for prison officials to hear addicts who have taken five or six different kinds of "cures" in various penal institutions discussing which one they liked best; that is, which one was the easiest.

In short, the popular ideas about narcotic addicts are just as correct as the student's definition of a crab as "a red fish which swims backwards," an excellent definition except that a crab isn't red, isn't a fish, and doesn't swim backwards.

PARTY IN PARIS

by CURTIS H. REIDER

I SAID to Hemingway, "Let's go downtown," and he said "Alright, let's go downtown." So we went downtown.

We stopped in at the drugstore and the soda-slinger put the graham-cracker bowl under the counter.

"What's the big idea?" I said.

"You're punks," he said.

"Who's punks?" I said.

"You're punks," he said.

"I'll have a chocolate soda," Ernie said.

"Give me a hot fudge," I said.

"Oh fudge!" the slinger said.

"Shut up, funny guy," I said.

"You're punks," he said.

"Alright, we're punks," I said.

"So what?" Ernie said.

Then we went out in the street and started walking and met two bats and a fairy.

"Oh hello," the fairy said.

"Greetings, Nancy!" Ernie said.

"Let's get the hell out of here," I said.

"Let's go up to Gertrude Stein's," Hemingway said.

"O.K., Ernie," I said.

So we went up to Stein's place and went in and sat down. Picasso was there reading the funny papers and Alice P. Toklas was housebreaking the dog.

"Where's Gerty?" Hemingway said.

"She's working," Pablo said.

"She'll be in in a minute," Alice said.

"That's good," I said.

Then I turned and saw Gerty. She was coming through the door. Slowly coming through the doorway slowly Gertrude Stein slowly came moving slowly through the doorway slowly coming slowly.

"Hello," she said.

"Hello," Ernie said.

"Hello," I said.

"Sit down down," she said.

I sat down. Ernie sat down. We all sat down.

"James Joyce is coming," she said.

"That's great," I said.

Then Gerty got to walking back and forth. Forthly back pacing Stein backly forth and moving back and forth Stein pacing. Pablo guffawed like hell at the Katzenjammer Kids. Alice did something to the dog. He was an Airedale.

"And also Comrade cummings is coming," Gertrude said.

"That's great," I said.

"That's great," Ernie said.

"When's he coming?" I said.

"Soon coming cummings is," Stein said.

"That's great," I said.

Then we heard someone coming up the stairs.

"That's Jimjam," Alice said.

"Who?" I said.

"Jimjam Joyce," she said.

"That's great," I said.

Just then James came in with Stuart Gilbert, without knocking. He stubbed his toe on the door-sill.

"Hooglerongs of rummeltang," he swore.

"You hurt yourself?" I said.

"Heeronsung the zoolunrung!" he said.

"Sit down," Gerty said.

"I'll get the arnica," Alice said.

"No, I'll get the arnica," Hemingway said.

"No, I'll get the arnica," Pablo said.

"There isn't any arnica," Gertrude said.

"Heerzoy the zoombrung," Joyce groaned.

"He said he wants a cup of tea," Stuart Gilbert said.

"Tea!" I said.

"Sure," Picasso said.

"Eence meenee mynee mo," Joyce said.

"He said he thinks he'll make it coffee instead," Stuart said.

"Coffee," Alice said.

Gertrude went out into the kitchen fast through the fastly moving fastness of her fastness.

And then—

ZUDDENLY—

door (all I's on) openingly moving (into what) into the nonhouse of stein.

AND

oN tHe silL

standingly staring ((in his left claw (unshutshut) forgetmenots)) swaying reelingly swaying

StAnDs:::;@@//??

comrade cum(ee)mings.

Toward Comrade Me (on Uncouch) blearily turning redrimmed I's.

single word:

"SO!"

"Hi!" I said.

"Tweedleboom the rumdum," Joyce said.

"Hello, I said," Ernie said.

pinkshaded nonface glowls

(&) ——— one (1) BuRp!!!

and unlips (winereddened) openingly slowly (fangs glare) & says:::

"howzeverywun?"

"I'm fine," I said.

"Hoomelclang," Joyce said.

"Swell," Ernie said.

"Well, I got to go now," I said.

"Don't go," Gerty said.

"I got to go," I said.

"Why?" she said.

"Got to see Eugène Jolas," I said.

"Can't," Gilbert said.

"Why not?" I said.

"He and Sweegy Weegy are off on a rozenweit studying the botany of Saturn's rings."

"I see," I said.

I went anyway.

I went down to François' joint on the Rue de la Paix.

"Je veux un magazine," I said.

"Quel magazine?" François said.

"*The Saturday Evening Post*," I said.

And then I went home.

"Christ!" I said.

BATON EXHIBITIONISTS

by DAVID EWEN

Author, "From Bach to Stravinsky," "The Unfinished Symphony," etc.

THERE exists no group of musicians more addicted to vain exhibitionism and self-glorification, at the expense of the art they are supposed to exalt, than conductors of symphony orchestras. If any violinist, pianist or even prima donna attempted to gain the favor of audiences through the means employed quite casually and consistently by the usual batonist, he or she would be razzed to death. The music audiences, however, are strangely tolerant where the conductor is concerned, and readily succumb to the pompous self-advertisement, sideshow gymnastics and Barnum showmanship which he employs to impress them.

Only recently I stumbled across a news item which prettily illustrates my point. "Paul Paray, talented and temperamental orchestra director of the Colonne concerts in Paris,"—so runs the United Press dispatch—"switches batons in mid-symphonic stream. In a recent rendition of César Franck's 'Variations Symphoniques,' Monsieur Paray changed sticks with such lightning rapidity as to leave his audience marveling at his apparent sleight-of-hand movements." The audience, we are told further, throngs the concert-hall in order to see this "talented" M. Paray go through his necromantic monkeyshines.

While most conductors do not go to quite such extremes to entertain their audiences, they nevertheless indulge in equally superfluous means to attract publicity and admiration. Many of them go in for an absurd corybantic gesturing which is carefully rehearsed to fascinate the audience but which succeeds, more often than not, simply in confusing the orchestra men. It was the late Artur Nikisch who convincingly proved that an orchestra can play superbly even if its conductor employed no gesture more exaggerated than an occasional upward and downward beat, so slight as to be hardly perceptible beyond the fifth row of the parquet. And in our own day, Mr. Toscanini—with his casual circular movement of the arm, which is almost unchanging in its rhythmic rigidity—is equally convincing.

Most orchestra conductors, however, employ head and arms and body in demoniac movement; a savage in a frenzied religious rite seems apathetic in comparison with some of them. Wilhelm Furtwaengler, in a tender passage, swaying his body backwards and then raising his face and arms toward the sky as though in supplication to the Muse; Otto Klemperer twisting his torso into strange contortions in climactic passages; Sir Thomas Beecham going through exotic movements of exaggerated, even lascivious passion from the first bar of music until the last; Leopold Stokowski who, with each concert, gives a fine imitation of an æsthetic dancer—these belong in the theatre and not on the concert stage. I wonder how many of their absurd movements and gestures would be retained if there were no audiences behind their backs. As a matter of fact, I do not wonder, because I've seen some of them during rehearsals and have discovered that, strangely enough, they can urge equally efficient music from their orchestra without benefit of a circus performance on the side.

But absurd gestures are not the only weapons employed by the conductor to evoke awe. There is a conductor in the East (kindness, alone, prevents me from mentioning his name) who uses cosmetics before each concert; and this same conductor is *notorious for detesting soloists on his program because, he feels*, they rob him of some of his lime-light. There is another conductor—he is especially well-known for his summer concerts—who wears a corset at every performance so that he may cut an elegant figure in front of his men. Perhaps the aptest illustration, however, of the effort which orchestra conductors make to glorify themselves is to be had in an episode that occurred several seasons ago in Philadelphia.

At the last rehearsal of the season, Mr. Stokowski suddenly distributed the music of Johann Strauss' "Blue Danube" waltz to his men, and suggested a careful rehearsing of the work. The men, knowing well that the Strauss waltz was not on the final program of the season, were amazed that their conductor should wish to rehearse it for no apparent reason; nor did Mr. Stokowski's terse explanation, that he was interested in developing certain sections for his own curiosity, satisfy them. A week after this rehearsal, the summer season—under guest-conductors—began in Philadelphia, and the first concert was appropriately inaugurated with a speech delivered by the director of the orchestra. Suddenly he turned toward the boxes and announced: "I see that we are singularly honored in having, as a guest tonight, Mr. Stokowski. I wonder if Mr. Stokowski would honor us, and incidentally open our summer season auspiciously, by performing one number with our orchestra." Mr. Stokowski, in his box, made a gesture of refusing. What? Perform a composition without a fitting rehearsal! But the plea of the director, and the clamor of the audience, would recognize no refusal. And so, shrugging his shoulders in humble submission, Mr. Stokowski descended to the platform and conducted the orchestra in Johann Strauss' "Blue Danube" waltz, which made audience and press marvel at the fact that Mr. Stokowski could give such a thrilling performance of the work without a single rehearsal. (They ascribed it to his personal magnetism, which electrified his men.)

But the loudest grumble arises when symphony conductors exploit the music they perform for mere self-glorification. In their attempt to become distinct personalities of the baton they yield to the growing craze to give "new readings" of thrice-familiar works in which their personalities obtrude prominently. Very often, these "new readings" succeed in being nothing more than gruesome distortions of the original intent of the composer. Phrases are twisted into unrecognizable shapes; the rhythm entirely renovated; accompaniments given raucous predominance over the main themes. Bruno Walter injects *Windpausen*—extended pauses in the middle of the score to bring out more forcefully a certain passage—whenever the whim strikes him. On the other hand, Otto Klemperer sublimely disregards suspensions and rests. I have heard performances in which Willem Mengelberg took it upon himself to delete entire slices from a Tschaikovsky symphony; and when Serge Koussevitsky, who knows better, felt that Schubert's "Unfinished Symphony" should be given a modernized version and changed the tempi and the phrasing so radically that the first movement became a sour ghost of itself. Acceleration of fast movements until they can compete for all-time speed-records, and ridiculous exaggeration of forte passages, especially in the wind, tympani and double-bass, are also frequent among conductors eager to thrill audiences with new conceptions of masterpieces. For these conductors have not yet learned that the highest art to which they can attain is to have their orchestra perform the score exactly as it is printed upon paper; and that the performances that electrify discriminating audiences are those on which the conductor has left no obtrusive fingerprints of his own.

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WE TEACH THEM TO WRITE

by ERIC DUTHIE

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BEFORE the earthy onslaughts of the Faulkners, the English purists of America are fighting another rear-guard action. "Good English," they say, "is supposed to be amenable to standard and to precept. There are definite rules. Clarity, economy, force, color—you can find out how to achieve them."

You can! I discovered this in an American college when I was suddenly faced with the terrifying prospect of teaching people how to write. Brought up in Scotland, where they give you enormous quantities of dictation and bid you listen to the rhythms of the sentences, I had never been taught how to write. Indeed, for long I was one of those who think of an anacoluthon as a kind of serpent coiled round a tree and trying to swallow a horse.

The truth unnerved me. I abandoned the image with reluctance; rushed out and bought half-a-hundredweight of Manuals of Rhetoric; and, with the kindly help of tobacco and other stimulants, contrived to learn the language of the textbooks so as to maintain a sufficiently dignified intellectual distance between myself and my class. I discovered (I blush to tell it) subordination and parallelism and many other curious things that I had known, *but never consciously known*, about sentences—mysteries to the agile inventors of Freshman's Rhetoric. I learned the rules. I have been re-learning them every year since.

From my researches among the college Quintilians, I conclude that their Shakespeare is Lord Macaulay. Rarely, indeed, is he mentioned in them by name, but the secret passion is none the less present; his influence is behind them pricking them on to their hateful task. Of course there are individual differences even in the manuals. Where the emphasis is on clarity or simplicity, one pictures a pale-eyed rhetorician who has read "The Bride of Kerith." Where it is on vividness or colorfulness, I suspect a gentleman in baggy flannels and yellow shoes with an ill-concealed admiration for Bret Harte. If the villain devotes many hours of weary labor to exposition and debate, he has read the publicity pages of the magazines or the Prefaces of Bernard Shaw.

Freshman English is inflicted on American university students because they commit the crime of speaking and thinking in their native idiom. They might, of course, be encouraged to write this language (and a very good language it is); but the instructors have no manuals on that, and the prestige of a university demands that its products be able to write something approximating to what its instructors conceive literary English to be.

College students in England are spared this heart-breaking business of learning to write by rule, partly owing to the natural laziness of the lecturer, who assumes that the student can write and promptly plucks him if he can't, but mainly because the difference there between the language of letters and of speech is not considerable. The fact that in America the gulf is rapidly decreasing merely makes life harder for the unfortunate Freshman, whose modern reading (if he does any) as well as modern speech contribute to incapacitate him for acquiring the dead language. Officially, of course, the universities believe that literary American became static with Washington Irving, so they lost their battle before they saw the enemy.

Outside the colleges the barbarian hordes have a language as virile and slangy and almost as loose as the Elizabethans, gloriously fluid, unformulated, growing out of the lives of a vigorous, unlettered population whose natural tongue no amount of *Romances* and movie magazines seem able to emasculate; a language already being woven into tales, novels and poems by the writers who have ears and use them. But the universities know little of the Andersons and Hemingways and Faulkners, not to mention the host of young writers who are being raised to the better grade of so-called little magazines.

These writers are in process of mastering the new language. They are adapting the language of the people to artistic purposes. They differ from most of their forerunners in that they are losing consciousness of the other English—the traditional English.

Formerly, of course, American authors have made use of "Americanisms," but the aura of Artemus Ward clung to them. They were amused at their own smartness. They were literary comedians playing with a dialect. The humorous was their only safe ground. Even the America of O. Henry is a tourist's America, broad, bright and shallow—easily seen. Reading him, I see what an Englishman could see; his "Americanisms" float on the surface of a slick English style. On the other hand, though it is clear that a man like Faulkner is often turgid and melodramatic, that much of his writing may come to one as a stream of far from lucid stage directions, and that some of his stories are absolute flops, I yet feel in the marrow of his work forces and subtleties of American thought that have not been exploited before. Beside Faulkner, O. Henry is an Englishman.

What is happening is that the adaptation to literature of the people's language is bringing the writer closer to the realities of which the language is a reflection.

Interpreted narrowly, this might imply a defense of the fashionable in language, or even an incitement to use it. The problem of slang was one with which the Elizabethans were faced, and to judge by its common appearance together with that of "loose grammar" in their work, it is likely that they never even saw it as a problem. But this absence of the academic mind did not prevent their getting a place in English literature.

So, to-day, with the living language and grammar in its present unstratified state, and with a population whose ingenuity in perpetrating violent metaphor is surely unparalleled amongst Anglo-Saxon peoples, American writers are bound to employ terms and phrases whose impermanence will be the means of dating their work. This alone, however, will not destroy it. And there is selectivity even in the use of the very new, for one may distinguish between the word or phrase that fills a need in the language that reflects something lasting in modern life, and those relatively few but much overworked terms that change from year to year with an almost calculable rapidity.

But to return to that painful experience of American students college English: Need one say that American literature will not suffer therefrom? By means of Freshman English courses, those who have no feeling at all for words may learn to write a robot language—"clear, economic, forceful, colorful"—thus preparing themselves for their future place in the vast organizations of American industrialists—business, pulpit, press and college.

As for the few who have a flair for writing and who are going to write anyhow—they are probably in the poolroom having a quiet game with the milkman, or enjoying a warm affair with their landlady's daughter—much too busy to bother overmuch about the careful fellow who feeds them text-book English.

RACING SCENE SEMITIC

by HARRY I. COHEN

THIS is a true story about a race horse. It is more than that. It is about a race horse and the Jewish problem.

What a pity that I am not an imaginative scribbler, a story-teller *de luxe*, who might embellish this simple narrative by having the American Jewish Committee and the American Jewish Congress in a friendly exchange of opinion on the matter. Unfortunately my training has been along lines reportorial and I cannot very well and for very long romance, and so the story.

The scene is Magnolia Downs. It is the fourth race of a sunny December afternoon down South. Gold Medal, an easy 3 to 1 favorite, is my choice for a straight bet. As I leisurely saunter over toward the two-dollar window to place my money, I am feeling emancipated. The filly Gold Medal does not, so far as I know, come from Jewish stock. Certainly, the *Daily Racing Form*, over which I had been poring, made no mention of it. My betting in itself could not be construed as significantly Jewish as there were also a few *Goyim* out at the track. Then what impulse could have prompted me to take one final look at the program of entries for the fourth race: Good Old Jewish Consciousness—I'll never berate thee again! For lo and behold (I can well become biblical), my eyes focused themselves on a name I'd heretofore overlooked, so sure was I that Gold Medal was the only horse in the race! But, praise the Maccabees, there, staring at me from the line-up of the fourth event, was one Mattathias, an entry from the Kronbacher stables.

Having piously kindled the light of Chanukah for my six-year-old youngster seven nights before, I naturally took the tip as heaven-sent, for who could refuse a bet on a bang-tail named Mattathias on the last day of Chanukah? Certainly not I. Quickly reversing my steps, I took a look at the final odds. Gold Medal was now 2 to 1 and Mattathias a 50 to 1 shot, so help me. Well, I know my Cabala and quickly added up all the numerals on both sides of Mattathias' name on the entry-sheet, and the handicapper's numbers and digits representing his weight. The total in either column came to eight—and it was the eighth day of Chanukah. There was no need of further delay. The two-minute bell had rung. Action was required.

I am at the window. I place a two-dollar bill on Mattathias to win. The ticket-seller looks surprised. It is evidently his first sale on that long-shot. I feel sorry for him and for all the others. What do they know of two thousand years of Jewish tradition! I glance at my ticket. Could I believe my eyes—yes, there it was, the printed symbol of that race—and mine—clearly stamped on every ticket: a Menorah. "Rock of Ages" I used to sing in Sunday School on Chanukah; it had not been in vain. I walk up the steps and into the grandstand. The horses are at the post. An excruciatingly long two minutes and then—they're off! All close together—now they're at the turn—one horse leading by a nose—who could it be but—yes, *it is Mattathias!* Around the turn and into the stretch. I lower my glasses. It's in the bag. My eyes are averted. I won't look until they're at the finish post. They're coming up to it now. I open my eyes just as Mattathias rushes across, the ninth in a ten horse race.

Well, anyhow, I can take it. How well do I remember hearing our old rabbi say, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away—blessed be the name of the Lord."

"Son," I casually asked a stable boy on the way out of the track that afternoon, "who was riding Mattathias in the fourth today?"

"Callahan, boss," was his cheerful rejoinder. "He's the jockey who crosses himself before every race."

BOYD DIGESTS THREE BOOKS

"BEYOND the Mexique Bay." (*Aldous Huxley.*) New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.75—Apart from the learned monographs of the archæologists, the literature inspired by Central America has a wearisome Pollyanna note which I find quite hard to bear. Æsthetic Pollyannas, economic Pollyannas, sociological Pollyannas, have all regaled us with the incomparable charms of primitive goings-on in Tehuantepec, Quezaltenango, Oaxaca, Chicicastenango, Uaxactun, Ejutla, and Miahuatlan. The general implication is that goitre, malaria, filth, bloodshed, and cruel death are amply compensated for by the glyphs, shawls, door-ways, stelae, and religious processions which brighten the lives of the inhabitants. Mr. Huxley has written a different kind of book, although some pictures are supplied to prove that the glyphs, etc., are just what they are supposed to be. Essentially, however, this is the author of "Brave New World" envisaging a not-too-brave old world with the same biting skepticism. He thoroughly appreciates the reasons why Central America has refrained from emulating North American salesmanship, but is under no illusion that this procedure is necessarily superior. Nor does he think, like Stuart Chase, that all would be well if the best features of both Americas could be combined. In brief, a witty, provocative, disillusioned, and highly original travel book, to be placed with, but above, "Jesting Pilate."

"Modern Art." (*Thomas Craven.*) New York: Simon and Schuster. $3.75—Mr. Craven has the engaging quality of talking about what are surely the most uninteresting people in the world, to wit, painters, as if they were amusing and stimulating companions. A number of characteristic illustrations of modern art will confirm those who prefer Manet and Whistler to Braque and Picasso in their fiercest prejudices, and raise the ever-fascinating problem as to how anyone can simultaneously like Charles Burchfield and Modigliani. I prefer to contemplate the printed text, not excluding the half-sentimental, half-mocking account of the mythical Bohemia of Paris, with what the author calls its "system of compulsory cohabitation," which inflicts upon the discerning stranger intimate contacts with the dreariest collection of trollops ever foisted upon Murger-fed hicks. He concludes with a sound analysis of the claims of proletarian art, pointing out that Communism as a dogmatic religion, using art for propaganda, is on the wrong track, the track that has always been fatal to the development of great art. Mr. Craven discusses art as a human being, with alert faculties and a minimum of mere prejudice; his is neither the jargon of the æsthetes nor the bagman's sales talk.

"The Elder Henry James." (*Austin Warren.*) New York: The Macmillan Co. $2.50—An interesting account of the eminent parent of the two better known Jameses, an American type now so extinct that it is difficult to believe it ever existed. Mr. Warren quotes Santayana as saying that James was "one of those somewhat obscure sages whom early America produced: mystics of independent mind, hermits in the desert of business, and heretics in the churches." His civilized attitude toward life and religion, his complete emancipation from the current superstitions of his time, whether those of the Babbitt or Fourierist variety, arouse in one a nostalgia for the America in which such men were possible. Today a James would be anathema to our neo-Thomists, New Humanists, and newly fledged Marxists, since he was incapable of seeing any virtue in regimentation, and believed in that which is precisely the greatest lack in American life: individualism. The very desire for it has atrophied in a couple of generations, during which time its exercise has been severely discouraged.

THE LOST ART OF THE MOTION PICTURE

by RICHARD SHARPE

MR. EDISON played midwife and alchemistic mother to a new Muse when from his wires and gadgets he constructed his Kinetoscope. She was a noisy child from the first twinge of her birth pangs, and bawled and flickered so dreadfully that none of the established Muses would admit her relationship to their company. She certainly didn't look very artistic, and no one would have been foolish enough to predict the floods of gold this maiden would produce from heaven in her adolescence.

Current history tells that tale. From the nickelodeons has grown the titanic industry of the movies, the most profligate business in the world, and the least understood. Long after she was a billionairess, this magical child was still said to be in her infancy. She detoured here, and meandered there, and no man could say where she would end or what she was about—least of all, her high priests and her acolytes.

Presently, a shadowy formula for the invocation of the art of Cinema began to form. Huge orchestras accompanied her every move. From Germany came impressionistic pictures, with a sort of postured dancing to their actors' movements, with sets backed by revolving doors, by rising cranes, by carousels, which moved in rhythm or in counterpoint to their protagonists. Crowd scenes became torrential sweeps. Out of Russia, new born and clean swept of old ideas, sprang another oddment to amaze. A film which danced. A method of juxtaposing series of scenes in what they labelled "montage," where the succession and arrangement of visual images built a mood upon a mood upon another mood, and rose like a geyser to a vortex of emotional intensity.

Hollywood looked, and shook its head. A sprinkling of directors imitated the manner of these importations, but it is very doubtful that many of them understood the underlying methods which made that manner possible.

Eventually the American public grew a taste for these European antics, and with stress and puffing the moguls of the cinema attempted to supply them. Their efforts were pathetic, until they began to import the directors who had devised the novelties. For a short period, it appeared that Cinema was finally growing up. Of the pictures of that period, Herr Murnau's "Sunrise" and Rex Ingram's "Mare Nostrum" were perhaps outstanding.

In both of these, the actors moved in rhythm with a flowing setting. The players seemed more mimes in a pageant, or dancers in a choreographic drama. There was little of the stage in either picture. Both Ingram and Murnau seemed to realize they were working in a medium of movement, where the bodily, the scenic, and the dramatic movements must be correlated into a perfect inter-rhythm, where even the camera must be animated by a musical and artistic progression of attitudes and angles, and the whole thing integrated into a sort of symbolical ballet of comedy and tragedy.

For this display of taste, Ingram was hounded off to the French Riviera, and Murnau was badgered and bedevilled into throwing up the sponge and heading for the South Seas, to make the exquisitely choreographic "Tabu."

It must be observed in passing that both of these pictures had specially arranged musical scores accompanying them. For the Ingram opus, a selection from Ernest Bloch's "Concerto Grosso" was used as the theme of the sea with extreme effectiveness. In the recorded electrical score to "Sunrise," some unknown genius used Wagner's "Siegfried's Idyll" for the love theme, Honegger's "Prelude to La Tempête" for the storm, and Schelling's "Victory Ball" for the amusement park. This was a sufficient number of years back that such music was esoteric, to say the least. Had the resident orchestra or the organ in a movie palace played for this picture, it is only too probable that it would have used "Moonlight and Roses" (*née* Goldmark's "Andantino") for love passages, the "Manhattan Serenade" for the amusement park, and the Storm Scene from the overture to "William Tell" for the squall.

Here for the first time was artistic concinnity on film. The music was so aptly chosen that it seemed composed for the purpose. The acting, the settings, the montage and the camera angles together produced a completely symphonic effect of surging motion. For once, motion pictures became animate compositions, superbly arranged and beautifully visualized through the eye of a camera which postured in angles congenial to the musical flow of the action at all times.

Neither picture was much of a success. The whole conception was too fresh, too subtly done. Had it been presented a few years after, to a public gradually prepared for it, the story of either one might have been different. But then it was too late. In the interim, the movies had become talkies, little Cinema's mind went off the trolley utterly, and she passed into the stagnant horrors of a second childhood.

The less said about the early talkies, the better. They were blasted by the critics from one end of the world to the other, and quite rightly. Presently, when the clanging of cash registers had abated sufficiently, when the novelty of the vocal screen had worn thin, the producers heeded this rising clamor. Stage directors began to be shunted back to the stage. Men who knew the screen resumed their previous positions. There are indications that the art of the motion picture is on its way back.

Joseph Von Sternberg was perhaps as successful as anyone in his incorporation of speech into what had been a pantomimic ballet to music. His picture "Dishonored" is a good example. In it, speech was cut to an irreducible minimum. Music accompanied every dramatic scene, an underlying comment and accompaniment to the action. There were scenes which consisted of nothing but the slow undulance of Marlene Dietrich's glide, which lent tempo. There was a seduction sequence in which her antics and those of Lew Cody were far more Diaghileff or Kreutzberg than they were dramatic, and they were negotiated to a frenzy of Russian balalaikas. An orchestral and pianistic thread were inseparably bound in with the drama.

From familiarity with the making of pictures in all departments (I was, among other things, an assistant producer at the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studios for three years), from the files of a retentive memory of one who has seen all the better pictures since Sarah Bernhardt died for twenty minutes in "Queen Elizabeth" and Mount Etna erupted so prettily in "Cabiria," I have been enabled to formulate certain general theories on the proper field of motion pictures.

"Coq d'Or" resembles them in essence closer than any play. The dance dramas of De Falla are related. They are primarily dramas of motion, rather than emotion, to music. They are choreography more than drama, with only as much borrowing from the stage as would be used by a superlative dancer in the scenario for a ballet. The great effectiveness of machinery, of mounted men, of racing trains, of violent action, has all risen from the visual excitement of metred movement. The magnificent crowd scenes in German films were an offspring of Reinhardt's mass stage movements, which in their turn were a borrowing from Diaghileff. One of the main characteristics of Lubitsch's films has been the rapid gliding rush of his actors down staircases. Any choreographer knows about staircases, and how significant a passage down them can become. De Mille uses surging mobs, torchlit cavalry, actual ballet, throughout his pictures.

I am not certain, even after conversations with some of these men, whether they entirely realize why these things turn out so well. Von Sternberg uses them consciously. Murnau did, too. But I am convinced that, in the course of the development of years, the whole film industry will eventually come to the realization that they are dealing in musical motion, that teachers of eurhythmics can be quite as important as dramatic coaches, that stories being prepared for the screen would benefit by being a collaboration between a scenarist, a director who understands choreography, and a very gifted musician.

Even today, our talkies are becoming less garrulous, their constant chatter being replaced by symphonic music. If the films are to come of age, to achieve anything of importance, the trend thus, and toward the *moving* pictures of the past, is inescapable. The vision of what some yet undiscovered genius could do, using a modified ballet technique in a stage frame as malleable as the screen, becomes almost fourth dimensional and extremely exhilarating. The prospects and the possibilities are almost illimitable, and as yet barely touched.

Heil Hitler!

"Politics are for men only—absolutely and unconditionally."
—Minister of Propaganda, Paul Goebbels.

A Bas Hitler!

"The present craze for blondeness should be deplored."—Ibid.

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THE THREE YELLOW MISERIES

by THELMA MAXEY

THERE are three terrible things in China: the plague, Chinese officials, and soldiers. And if the plague could get the better of the other two, not only foreigners, but also the Chinese population, would at last be able to draw a deep breath. The plague is brought by rats; all other miseries in China come from officials and soldiers, including banditry, *hunghutzes*, false judgment, squeezes, murders, and the drop in paper currency.

My dear friend, General Chang-Pu, son of the late Chang-Tso-Lin and brother of ex-dictator Marshal Chang-Hsue-Liang, commands a brigade (6,000 men), which means an income of $10,000 Mex monthly. If one shows one's expenses for feeding, paying and equiping 6,000 men when the brigade consists of only 5,000 men, one can pocket $4,000 Mex monthly salary to the missing 1,000 men, and some extra $6,000 Mex on munitions and other running expenses!

Chinese police get a salary of Mex $12 (U. S. $2.25) per month, while the soldiers get $4. True, the government is supposed to feed the latter, but in this case half of these $4 are retained from their salaries. You will therefore not be surprised to know that soldiers plunder the farmers, hold up trains and generally help themselves to whatever they can lay their hands on.

If there is one point on which the whole 400,000,000 citizens of the Chinese Republic unanimously agree, it is the tacit recognition that a squeeze, especially if paid in hard cash, is a quite legal item of revenue. You must pay it to the man who is handing you your passport, lest he keep the latter back and make all sorts of trouble for you until he gets his squeeze—as he will. You must pay it to the police if you want to give a concert, open a shop, a theatre, cinema or club. You must squeeze everybody to open a gambling house, which they will nevertheless close the next day following because officially you have no right to open a gambling house—no more than you have a right to play any card game, Mah-jong, chess or dominoes, anywhere in public or private.

When, during martial law, you must turn in at any designated hour, policemen set their watches wrong and stop you at a quarter to the hour of curfew and let you go only after paying them a dollar or two. Once I was stopped in this way, on my return home, for the third time in one evening. As I had no money left for the third one, he took my passport which I was forced to redeem next day for $5, double you see, because the station official wanted his squeeze too.

If you shoot somebody in self-defense, you are nevertheless sure to get a couple of years in prison. If somebody has robbed you and you inform the police, you will be arrested until they have investigated the case. They also arrest the witnesses. Cases of foreigners without extra-territorial rights are of course even less happily disposed of.

If you are in prison you must pay for your food if you get any, and a squeeze to the guard for procuring it. Tortures are still used in the Chinese prisons and are applied impartially to whites without extra-territorial rights. A pretty picture to retain is a mode of execution popular in northern cities: a death loop is dropped over the unfortunate one's head, a stick thrust through it and twisted, tourniquet fashion, until the victim is strangled. After a bit the executioners let go and, if the interested party returns to his senses, the process is repeated until they are satisfied with the results.

One day in Mukden, I attended the trial of Mr. Häussler, secretary of the German Consulate, on a charge of murder. Conducted simultaneously was a civil case brought by the brother of the deceased against Häussler for damages. Thus the same man was the plaintiff as well as the chief witness in the criminal prosecution.

With his wife and small son and another couple, Häussler was driving to Dunlin (Tung-Ling) when they saw a runaway team with a Chinese cart some distance away. They saw the cart crash into a tree, and, arriving at the scene, tried to be of assistance by dragging a woman and her brother from the wreckage. The man was uninjured, but the woman had a broken leg—from which she died. (Doubtless not without the help of a home-made Esculapius.)

Following Häussler's deposition, his attorney asked the Judge to hear witnesses for the defense. "Who are they?" the Judge asked. "Mr. and Mrs. Comrath." The Judge shook his head. "These persons were traveling in the defendant's car and are consequently his friends; I cannot attach any value to their words. . . ."

Häussler was found guilty and sentenced to one year's imprisonment, which could however, in this case (as in that of any person who may possibly have resources) be supplanted by a fine of $600. Furthermore, he lost his civil case to the deceased's brother, comprising $2,000 Mex compensation and $1,003.27 Mex costs of funeral and legal proceedings. Aggregate Mex $3,003.27.

I offer these quotations and figures translated directly from the Chinese court record. And still further, although the money was paid by Häussler personally, and not by the Consulate, he was prosecuted in the capacity of Consulate's Official, and, therefore, for political reasons, could not make an appeal to Public Opinion, through the press or otherwise, lest he thus spoil relations presently existing between German Consulates in China and Chinese authorities.

Nor does this sort of justice fall only upon foreigners. I recall the case of a Chinese peasant whose cartwheel ran against a sagging gate, knocking it down and killing his mother who was riding with him in the cart. The penalty for matricide under the Chinese law is death. The boy was sentenced and executed a few days later.

These other stories, of course, might be entitled Cases-against-premature-waiving-of-extra-territorial-rights-in-China-by-those-who-still-have-them, but there is a better reason than the mere convenience of foreigners residing in China. Without the commercial benefits of the only two powers who have shown some unbiased desire for fair play, China will sink into hopeless inertia and a decadent slime from which it may not be able to raise its head.

Unless the people conducting American and British interests, upon which so many millions subsist, are protected, foreign trade in China will perish. Abolition of their extra-territorial rights will mean that one day the Diplomatic Minsters will begin a frantic search to resurrect beautiful gilt-edged documents which were, after all, signed only by bandits, even if they did use the glorified titles of "President," "Vice-President" or "Head of Nanking Government." They will gasp, "You promised—?," but Chinese officialdom will stride gleefully on, leaving its erstwhile allies with arms o'er-burdened with Concessions, Consortiums and *beau geste* intentions—better known as "holding the sack."

ANYTHING FOR A LAUGH

by JEROME WEIDMAN

"HOW was your vacation?" I asked Miss Edlitz, our switchboard operator, the day she came back.

"Swell," she said.

"Yeah," I remarked, "you're looking that."

As a matter of fact she looked terrible.

"Well," she said, "I don't think I got much of a rest, but I had a swell time. What a time I had. Oh, boy. It'll take me a year to rest up. Did I have fun. I went to bed at three o'clock every. . . ."

"Where'd you go?"

"Stevensville Lake Country Club. It's not exactly the most expensive or even the biggest place. But you know how things are this year. But it was swell. We had a nicer crowd than the bigger and more expensive places. Oh, boy. Did I have a swell time. Believe me, the people from the other places came over to our place to have fun. And did we have it. Oh, boy. I went to bed at three o'clock. . . ."

"How much did you pay?"

"Twenty-four a week. But believe me the people from the thirty-two and thirty-seven-fifty places came over to our casino every night to have fun. Did we have fun. Oh, boy. We had nine people on the social staff. Can you imagine that! Nine. And were they a riot! I'm telling you I nearly passed out. There was so much to do I never even got any sleep. I went to bed at three o'cl. . . ."

"Have much of a crowd?"

"Well, they had about three hundred when I was there, but that was a small one for them. When they're really crowded they get a regular mob. But they take care of them all right. They've got nine on the social staff. Oh, yeah, so listen. They were all right, you knew, the nine of them. It was pretty good talent, but you know how those things are. Without a leader they couldn't do much. The first couple of days I was there they had a social director and the shows were O.K. But then they fired him, I don't know why. And for about a week it was pretty lousy. But even so it was better than the more expensive places. The people from the other places came to our casino for fun. But you know how it is. Without a director, what could they do? They were good and all that, but what could they do? You know how those things are."

"Yeah," I said. "I know."

"But towards the end they got a new social director. He was a nice young fellah and he was good too, let me tell you. Why, the people from the other places used to come over to our casino to watch the shows. He got those nine other fellahs working and I'm telling you for three days you never saw anything like it. It was *mar*velous. It was better than a Broadway show. You know, the people came from all the other places to watch. For about three days you never saw anything like it. It was *mar*. . . ."

The switchboard buzzed. "Wait a minute," Miss Edlitz said to me and answered it.

"But what?" I asked.

"But what what?"

"What happened after the three marvelous days?" I asked.

"Oh," she said. "Oh, yeah. For three days it was *mar*velous. But the fourth day it was lousy. I'm telling you, you never saw anything like it. It was terrible. I'm telling you it was *lou*sy. You know, they didn't seem to have any pep. The social director looked like his mother died or something. And that's the funniest part of it. A couple of the boys went over and asked him what the hell was the matter. And believe me, this is the God's honest truth. That's just what happened. Can you beat it?" Miss Edlitz paused.

"What?" I asked

"That's just what *happened*. His mother died. Honest, when I heard it, I couldn't get over it. You know, here I was, saying to myself how lousy he was and saying he looks just like his mother died. And sure enough, she did. I remember saying to one of the boys how funny it was. I mean about my saying that and it really happened. I guess he needed the job, so he snapped out of it and the next night the show was O.K. again. You should've seen the mob that came over from the other hotels. It was a great night all right. Oh, boy. I bet I didn't get to bed before four o'clock. You should've seen him. He was a riot. But he didn't last long."

"Who?" I asked.

"The social director. The one whose mother died. The next night the show was lousy again. A bunch of the boys were so sore they went to the office and complained. What *is* this, they said. This guy is *lou*sy. Why can't we have some good shows? You couldn't blame them. He was pretty rotten that night. He came around with some excuse about his wife getting an attack of appendicitis and dropping the baby and the baby nearly died and his wife got peritonitis or something like that. It sounded pretty fishy. We didn't even know he was married. He was such a nice young fellah, you know. So the office fired him and sent to New York for another social director. But the boys wanted to give the old one, you know, the old social director, the one whose mother died and his wife got appendicitis and dropped the baby and it nearly died, you know, they wanted to give him a good send-off. So what do you think they did?"

"What?" I asked.

"You'll die laughing when you hear it. They got a couple of cherry pies and when he was on the stage giving his last sh a couple of the boys stood up and let him have it right in the face. You should of seen him. I never laughed so much in my life. The whole audience laughed until I thought they would bust. And we had some crowd. Oh, boy. There must've been two hundred people there and a lot from other hotels too. He looked so funny with the red all over his face and clothes, you know. I thought I'd die from laughing. We went over to him after the show and asked him how it was. We were laughing so hard we couldn't stand up. He laughed also and said anything for a laugh, boys, anything for a laugh. But I think he was sore or something because there were tears in his eyes and I thought he'd bust out crying. God, you should've seen how funny he looked. Wiping cherry pie off his shirt. You know, I got to laugh every time I think of it."

Miss Edlitz chuckled reminiscently.

"What a night that was," she sighed, smiling. "I didn't go to bed before five o'clock."

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Those who speak of waste in Nature and point to it as evidence that there is no Intelligence in the universe judge this Intelligence by the standards that are applied to the Ford factories at Dearborn. Is the Author of life nothing but an efficiency expert? One of the proofs of the Americanization of the world is the demand of all peoples that their God shall be a Business Man, a Babbitt of turnovers, overhead and output, and a leak-plugger. There can never be any waste anywhere. Eternal chemistry and transcendental housekeeping know no waste. Nature—or God—is a spendthrift, not an expert accountant. Whenever I hear a man arguing against the existence of a Supreme Intelligence on the ground of waste, I know he is a tight-wad. No liberal, generous, extravagant person would ever use such reasoning.

—*Benjamin De Casseres*

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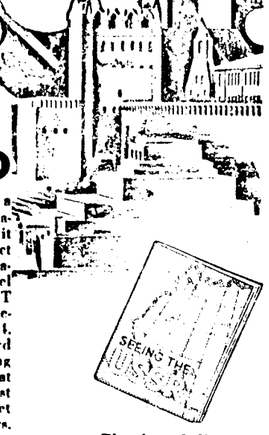

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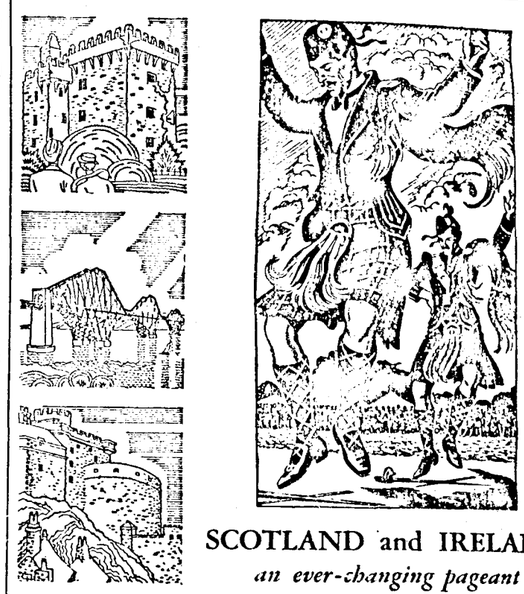

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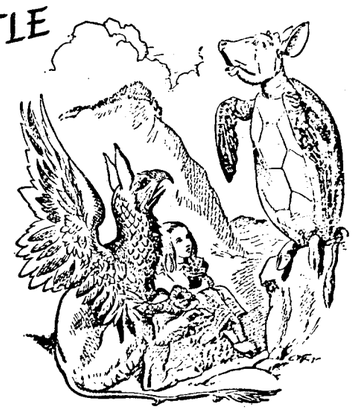

"We've had a lot of arithmetic," said the Mock Turtle, including the Gryphon in his glance. "But we can't figure out how anyone can go to Europe this year."

"Why, that's simple," said Alice. "You just send your baggage down to the pier and go aboard a steamship."

"But, Exchange Rates," shouted the other two in chorus.

Alice looked blank. "So what?" she said. "Just what have exchange rates to do with a round trip steamship passage from New York?"

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